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AN ANONYMOUS MEDIÆVAL CHRISTIAN CRITIC OF MAIMONIDES

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I.

It is the great merit of Dr. Jacob Guttmann, Rabbi in Breslau, in addition to his important monographs on the principal Jewish thinkers of the Middle Ages, to have presented clearly and in detail the influence of Jewish philosophical thought on Latin scholasticism.

He has done this in three valuable memoirs having the following titles: *Das Verhältniss des Thomas von Aquino zum Judenthum und zur jüdischen Literatur*, Göttingen 1891; *Die Scholastik des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts in ihren Beziehungen zum Judenthum und zur jüdischen Literatur*, Breslau 1902; and *Der Einfluss der Maimonidischen Philosophie auf das christliche Abendland*, in the first volume on Moses ben Maimon published by the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, Leipzig 1908.

As early as 1863 Joel had pointed out the influence of Maimonides on Albertus Magnus, and Guttmann followed up the investigations begun by Joel and extended them to Thomas Aquinas, the greatest of the Latin scholastics, and the other minor philosophers of the period.

The investigations of Joel and Guttmann have shown that in particular Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas,

who represent in mediæval scholasticism the union of Aristotelianism and Christian dogma, owe a great deal to Maimonides. It is not a matter of conjecture or of speculation, but of clear evidence, plain to any one who is willing to take the trouble to read, say, the demonstrations of the existence of God in the *Guide to the Perplexed*, and in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*. Certain parts in the two writers will be seen to correspond point for point. And if we consider the relative positions of each of these thinkers in his religious and intellectual milieu, this relation between them, in view of Maimonides' chronological priority, is just what would be expected.

Maimonides, as we know, was troubled by the fact that a literal understanding of the Scriptures seemed incompatible with results derived from a study of the philosophy in vogue at the time, i. e. the philosophy of Aristotle. And his purpose, as he tells his disciple Joseph Ibn Aknin, in writing his "Guide" is to help those who are similarly troubled by showing them that the Bible and philosophy are not really incompatible, and that therefore far from being obliged to reject the latter as heretical in its tendency, every thinking Jew is bound to rationalize his belief, i. e. to make it intelligent and not merely mechanical, by sounding the depths of the Scriptures, in which the Aristotelian philosophy is contained. In this undertaking a preliminary study of the various branches of science and philosophy will be of great help to him.

Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas were similarly placed in their generation in relation to the development of Christian thought. From the beginnings of European Christian thought until the latter half of the twelfth century, Plato and St. Augustine were the masters of theolo-

gian and philosopher, and the circle of speculation was limited to a discussion of the nature of God, the persons in the Trinity, the thoughts of God, or the Ideas as eternally prefiguring the world before its creation, and the human soul as a spiritual substance placed in the body from without. All these speculations as dealing entirely with the Intelligible or Spiritual World came in little contact with the facts and processes as observed in the material world, and hence a careful study of the latter was not regarded as important. The result was that speculation in Christian Europe had free rein before the thirteenth century, and there was not a thing one started out to prove about the Intelligible World which he could not without much difficulty succeed in proving. Thus every philosopher proves the existence of the Trinity as a philosophical and not merely theological truth, and St. Anselm even proves by reason that the Incarnation was a necessity.

A change in this state of affairs came about in the latter half of the twelfth century when the complete writings of Aristotle, heretofore unknown in Christian Europe, began rapidly to be translated into Latin from Arabic and Greek.

Aristotle is a different man from Plato. Plato soars to the heights on the wings of imagination and fancy, and so light are the latter that a slight stimulus from an unusually profound observation of life and thought lifts him into the empyrean, and he finds in heaven the *πῶν στῶ* from which he moves the earth.

Aristotle has his roots in the earth and from it he takes his nourishment. His highest abstractions stand in close relation to the concrete, and his most important investigations deal with the processes of motion, life, thought,

and action in this world. When he crowns this world with a God, it is by a process of reasoning which begins with the process of motion as an observed fact in the material world.

Hence when Aristotle—the Aristotle of the *Physics*, *Psychology*, and the *Metaphysics*—was discovered by the Christian schools of Europe in the latter half of the twelfth century they studied under him, and learned much from his rigorous methods of analysis and demonstration. The easy speculations of an Eriugena, and even in so close an analyst as Anselm, his attempts to demonstrate as rational necessities not merely the existence of God, but also His Trinity, and particularly the most special and most mysterious dogmas of the Church, such as the Incarnation, must have seemed crude to those trained in the school of Aristotle. Hence we see Thomas Aquinas making a division between those truths of religion and theology which can be demonstrated by the reason, and those which cannot. To the latter belong all those doctrines dealing with the intra-Trinitarian relations. It was clear that the relations between philosophy and theology were getting strained, and thinking minds of all shades of opinion were casting about for a *modus vivendi*. Hence there were those who opposed the introduction of the Stagirite into the schools, and gave their undivided allegiance to Augustine. Among those, on the other hand, who were out and out Aristotelians, ready and willing to go all the length of his extreme doctrines, after the fashion of the Arabian Averroes, who was their guiding star in the interpretation of Aristotle, the fashion gained ground of endeavoring to obviate the ire of the vigilant ecclesiastics and disarm all criticism, by stating loudly that their discussions simply

represent the views of the philosophers, and are not meant to replace the doctrines of the Church; that they are quite willing to retract any of their conclusions if they are found incompatible with the accepted religious truth. Having said this they felt free to discuss quite boldly any subject, however daring, and to reach conclusions which in their opinion followed from their premises.

Between these two extreme parties, the latter of which in the course of time found the city of Paris a rather uncomfortable place to stay in, and had the privilege of offering a martyr or two to the cause of free thought, there was the moderate school of compromise, and it counted in its midst two of the best men in the history of mediæval thought. These felt that a student of Aristotle could not wholly go back to Augustine. At the same time they were intensely loyal to Christian dogma, and less dominated by the authority of Aristotle than the Averroists. Their method was therefore, in cases of doubt as to Aristotle's meaning, to adopt an interpretation in favor of Christian dogma, and when Aristotle was clearly opposed to the latter, frankly to repudiate him.

This school, too, was in its beginnings received with disfavor by the strict Churchmen, and some of its doctrines were even condemned by the Bishop of Paris in 1277, but in the end its leaders won the day. There was really no stemming of the tide possible, which was caused by the setting in of the Aristotelian current, bringing a wealth of new and fresh concepts and methods on all topics of human thought to those who were getting weary of turning the wheel of the Platonic Ideas and Universals. And so it was the Dominicans who led in this movement of harmonization: Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas

stand at the very head as the Ibn Daud and the Maimonides of Christian Scholasticism.

Now it was quite natural in the circumstances that both Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas should look about for a similar attempt that was made before them, and they found it in Maimonides' "Guide of the Perplexed." In so far as the specific differences of Judaism and Christianity were not involved, the two scholastics saw no objection in adopting Maimonides' treatment of Aristotle.

As a result of Munk's edition and French translation of Maimonides' "Guide," which made the book accessible to those who could not read the Hebrew or the Latin, and the article of Saisset in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*, 1862, who speaks of Maimonides as the forerunner of St. Thomas Aquinas, and of the "More Nebukim" as announcing and preparing the "Summa Theologiae"; as a consequence further of the investigations of Joel and Guttmann, some careless writers fond of exaggeration made the unguarded statements that, "without Maimonides there would have been no Albertus Magnus and no Thomas Aquinas," and that, "Maimonides was the teacher of the whole Middle Age." Ueberweg-Heinze's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, which is in the history of Philosophy what Gesenius is in Hebrew grammar and lexicography, corrects this error in the last two editions of the second volume (8th ed., 1898; 9th ed., 1905). The late Dr. Wehofer, a Dominican, and Professor at the Minerva, in Rome, inserted in the eighth edition of Ueberweg-Heinze, volume II, p. 283 f., a discussion of the relation of Thomas Aquinas to Maimonides, which is reprinted without modification in the ninth edition of the same work, p. 310 f., under the

supervision of M. Baumgartner, Professor at Breslau, who took the place of Wehofer in revising and bringing up to date the chapter on the "Full Development of the Scholastic Philosophy."

This discussion is based on a work of Anton Michel: "Die Kosmologie des Moses Maimonides und des Thomas von Aquino in ihren gegenseitigen Beziehungen," *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 1891, and lays stress on the differences between the Christian and the Jewish thinker rather than on their agreements and the dependence of the former upon the latter, with the result that an error is made in the opposite direction, in minimizing the debt Thomas Aquinas undoubtedly owes to Maimonides. This oversight and misrepresentation is animadverted by Professor Clemens Baeumker, of the University of Strassburg, the famous editor of Ibn Gabirol's *Fons Vitae*, and probably the greatest living authority on the philosophy of the Middle Ages. In reviewing the ninth edition of Ueberweg-Heinze, II, for the *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* (vol. XXII 1909, pp. 130 ff.), he calls attention to Wehofer's addition, which he characterizes as "unglücklich." He praises the careful (*sorgfältig abwägend*) discussion of Guttmann on the question at issue, and points out that it should not merely have found a place in the Bibliography, but should have been consulted and made use of in the preparation of the paragraph in Ueberweg-Heinze. To make the matter of Aquinas' dependence upon Maimonides quite clear, he presents in parallel columns a few paragraphs from the "Summa Theologica" and the "More Nebukim" respectively, showing that the very passage in Thomas's *Summa* dealing with the proofs of the existence of God, which on account of its remarkable conciseness and lucidity is con-

sidered classic, is modeled in part, though in differing style, step by step upon Maimonides.

Recently Pierre Mandonnet, a Dominican of the University of Freiburg, in Switzerland, published the second edition of his very valuable work on Siger de Brabant, the chief of the Parisian Averroists of the thirteenth century.¹ In the second part of the study, Mandonnet edits all the works of Siger at present known, and among them also an anonymous treatise of the thirteenth century, entitled: "*Tractatus de Erroribus Philosophorum, Aristotelis, Averrois, Avicennae, Algazelis, Alkindi et Rabbi Moysis.*"

According to Mandonnet (II, Introd., XIV f.) the work was published with some omissions in Vienna under the name of Aegidius Romanus in 1482. Another edition appeared in Venice in 1581. Possevin inserted it in 1593 in an imperfect state in his *Bibliotheca Selecta*. D'Argentré in 1755 published an incorrect abridgment of the treatise in his *Collectio Judiciorum de Novis Erroribus*. Renan edited the portion dealing with the errors of Averroes from a Latin MS. in the Paris National Library in his *Averroes et l'Averroïsme*. Mandonnet himself in the first edition of his work on Siger, Louvain 1899, published the portion relating to the errors of Aristotle and Averroes, and in his second edition he edits the entire treatise from the same MS. that was used by Renan. Seven MSS. of the work are known, according to Denifle-Chatelain, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, I, p. 556, of which the only one

¹ Pierre Mandonnet, O.P.: *Siger de Brabant et l'Averroïsme Latin au XIII^{me} Siecle; I^{re} Partie, Étude Critique*, Louvain 1911. *II^{me} Partie, Textes Inédits*, Louvain 1908. Deuxieme édition revue et augmentée. See the present writer's review of this important work in the *Philosophical Review*, July 1911.

examined by Mandonnet is that of the Paris National Library, which he used in preparing his edition. The writing, he says, belongs to the end of the thirteenth century, and the text was collated by the copyist.

As the title indicates, the treatise consists of a list of philosophical and theological errors culled from the works of Aristotle, Averroes, Avicenna, Algazali, Alkindi, and Maimonides. There are no philosophical discussions of these errors, or refutations of them, nothing but the statement of the doctrine and the designation of it as an error. It would seem as if the author intended to follow up this bare enumeration of the errors with a second part devoted to the reasons for rejecting them from the point of view of philosophy or theology or both, though he nowhere says so explicitly. His purpose, in fact, is not scientific, but purely religious and apologetic, as we learn from the concluding chapter in which he invokes the name of Jesus and declares that the compilation of the passages of the above-named philosophers which contradict the Catholic faith was made by him because of his reverence for the name of Jesus and detestation of those who oppose him.

"O bone Jesu, ad laudem tuam, ob reverentiam nominis tui, necnon in detestationem contradicentium tibi, te auxiliante, loca in quibus Aristoteles, Averroes, Avicenna, Algazel, Alkindus et Rabbi Moyses nisi sunt contradicere fidei a te traditae, quam solam veram et catholicam reputo, summam in hac prima parte huius opusculi compilavi, ubi dictorum philosophorum vel omnes errores sunt simpliciter comprehensi, vel ad eos qui ibi sunt traditi, poterit diligens inquisitor reducere, quod cum nisi per te fieri potuerit, tibi sit honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen."

The italicized words, "*in hac prima parte huius opusculi*," seem to indicate that there was to be a second part, but whether he wrote it and it was lost, or he changed his mind and never completed his work, we have of course no means of knowing at the present time.

The treatise used to be attributed to Aegidius Romanus, a pupil of Thomas Aquinas, under whose name it was once edited, and this led Denifle-Chatelain, the editors of the *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, as well as Renan, and Mandonnet in his first edition to acquiesce in this attribution. In his second edition, however, the last named raises a very strong objection, in fact an unanswerable one, against Aegidius' authorship. Not to speak of the fact that the Paris MS. does not assign the treatise to any author, and that John of Paris, Canon of St. Victor, who wrote shortly after the death of Aegidius, does not mention the "*De Erroribus Philosophorum*" in the catalogue of Aegidius' works which he gives—circumstances purely negative—the following consideration adduced by Mandonnet² seems conclusive. On the important question of the unity or plurality of substantial forms the two are absolutely divided. Aegidius Romanus is a believer in the unity of forms like his teacher Thomas Aquinas, holding in fact that the opposite doctrine is not in consonance with the Catholic faith, "*ponere pluras formas contradicit fidei Catholicae*," whereas the "*De Erroribus*" is in favor of this very doctrine. Speaking of Aristotle, he says: "*Si autem*

² Attention had already been called to this difference in opinion between the "*De Erroribus*" and Aegidius Romanus as an argument against the authorship of the latter, by Maurice de Wulf in *Le traité de unité formae de Gilles de Lessines*, Paris 1902, p. 176, and again in his *Histoire de la Philosophie Médiévale*, 2nd ed., Paris 1905, p. 388, n., though Mandonnet does not mention it.

intelligit unam naturam simplicem, et quod sit in composito una forma tantum, videtur falsum esse. Mandonnet is therefore justified in rejecting Aegidius as the author of the treatise in question.

The positive side of his investigation of the authorship is also very plausible except in one point. We may agree with him when he lays down the year 1274 as the *terminus ante quem*, from the consideration that the "De Erroribus" does not yet know the last two books of the Metaphysics, which were probably translated about that date. Similarly plausible is his argument from the sympathetic treatment of Aristotle, refusing, as the author does, to attribute any more errors to him than is absolutely necessary, that the anonymous writer was a Dominican, though one who had not yet quite assimilated the Thomistic point of view, in that he rejects the doctrine of the unity of forms.³ But when Mandonnet takes a further step in narrowing the limits of the author's incognito, by making him a Spaniard, and this on the ground of the unusual familiarity he exhibits with Arabic and Hebrew sources, our answer must be that here the learned editor overshoots the mark. An unfortunate blunder is at the basis of the last inference.

It so happens that the anonymous author names as the work of Maimonides from which the errors are drawn, the *De Expositione Legum*. Mandonnet is naturally puzzled, as every one would be. Everybody knows that the philosophical *chef d'oeuvre* of Maimonides is the *More Nebukim*. It is also well known that the Scholastics in the thirteenth century, especially Albertus Magnus and Thomas

³ There seems to be another difference of opinion between the "De Erroribus" and Thomas Aquinas, which is discussed later in connection with the third error of Maimonides.

Aquinas, made diligent use of this great work, and that the former calls it *Dux Neutrorum*, or *Dubiorum*, in accordance with the Hebrew and Arabic title. If the author of the "De Erroribus" uses instead the *De Expositione Legum*, which no other scholastic seems to have known, it is a circumstance which argues unusual erudition in our incognito, and must have its special explanation, which Mandonnet accordingly provides. In the meantime what is this *De Expositione Legum*, if it is not the *Guide of the Perplexed*? Mandonnet, who cannot be expected to be as learned in Hebrew and Arabic literature as he undoubtedly is in scholastic, though, living in Freiburg, he could easily have made appropriate inquiries, in casting about for a plausible identification, hit upon the *Livre des Préceptes*, which was edited by M. Bloch in the original Arabic in 1888. This is of course the *Sefer Ha-Miṣwot*. Without apparently making any effort to ascertain the character of this *Livre des Préceptes*, Mandonnet seems to have been inveigled by the partial similarity of titles, and came to the conclusion that the author of the *De Erroribus Philosophorum* drew his Maimonidean philosophy from the *Sefer Ha-Miṣwot*, and as no one else has done it besides, he must indeed have been very learned, and had best be made a Spaniard.

The intelligent and interested reader will perhaps have guessed by this time that the *De Expositione Legum* is none other than the *More Nebukim* in disguise. The title *De Expositione Legum* seems strange perhaps, but no stranger than *De Benedicto Deo*, which is used once by Duns Scotus (*De Rerum Principiis*, qu. 7, artic. 2, No. 26; "*Huius opinionis videtur Rabbi Moyses, qui dicit in libro, qui intitulatur De Benedicto Deo...*"); comp. Guttman,

Die Scholastik des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts in ihren Beziehungen zum Judenthum, p. 162, note 1), or *De Uno Deo*, found in Albertus Magnus (comp. Guttmann, l. c.). In fact "*De Expositione Legum*" as a title can be easily explained as having been transferred to the entire work from the contents of the third part, which deals in great part with the *טעמי המצות*, or the reasons of the commandments, and to which the title is very applicable. We also learn from Perles, who discovered the first Latin translation of Maimonides' "Guide" (see J. Perles, "*Die in einer Münchener Handschrift aufgefundenene erste lateinische Übersetzung des Maimonidischen Führers*" *MGWJ.*, XXIV (1875), 9 ff.), that, though the MS. itself has no title, the monks of the Kaisheim monastery from which the MS. came into the possession of the Munich Royal library, gave it the name, *Rabi Moysis expositio nominum in libris prophetarum*. This designation was no doubt suggested to them, as Perles observes, from the author's words in the introduction: "*Istius libri prima intentio est explanare diversitates nominum quae inveniuntur in libris prophetarum*," corresponding to Ibn Tibbon's, *המאמר הזה ענינו הראשון לבאר עניני שמות באו בספרי הנבואה*. At the same time it may have been an old designation going back to the thirteenth century, and *De Expositione Legum* is not so far from *expositio nominum*.

It is now time to show positively that the anonymous critic of Maimonides actually does refer to no other book than the *More Nebukim*. And this is not very difficult, for he is careful to give us the book and the chapter where the doctrine in question is stated, though in a number of instances the citations are incorrect. That the division of chapters as indicated in the *De Erroribus* does not tally

with that of the original Arabic as edited by Munk, and of Tibbon's Hebrew translation, need not surprise us, since Perles has shown that the thirteenth century Latin translation is based not upon Tibbon, but upon Ḥarizi, and the chapters in the latter differ slightly from those of the former. The actual differences, however, as they appear in the *De Erroribus* cannot be explained by reference to Ḥarizi. For where the two Hebrew translations differ in the division of the chapters, as in the first and second parts of the *More*, the agreement of the Latin treatise where there is such, either in the text or in the margin, is invariably with Tibbon's division and not with that of Ḥarizi, as is indicated later on. Besides in the MS. which Perles examined the numbering of the chapters is quite different again from any of the others, the numbers running consecutively from the beginning to the end of the book, whereas in both Tibbon and Ḥarizi a new numeration begins with every part of the book. The treatise under discussion agrees in the latter respect with the Hebrew translations, but the numbers of the chapters tally only in a few instances. Now and then there is a variant number given in the margin of the Paris MS., which is correct and agrees with Tibbon. It is difficult to tell, therefore, whether the want of correspondence in the numbers is due solely to scribal errors in transcription, or whether it is due to an original difference in the chapter divisions, or to both causes at once.

II.

In the interest of showing that the *More Nebukim* is the book used, as well as in order to present to those readers who are not in the habit of rummaging among mediæval Latin documents, a brief chapter from the past,

when Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan, all in concert, with Aristotle as their common guide, and their several sacred books as a check, with diligence and enthusiasm pursued the truths of the world, of man, and of God, I shall in the second part of this paper treat of the Maimonidean doctrines to which the author of the *De Erroribus Philosophorum* takes exception.

He approves of Maimonides' rejection of the eternity of the world as taught by Aristotle, and refers to the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the second book of the *De Expositione Legum* in which Maimonides lays down his view that the world came into being in time. The fifteenth chapter in fact begins in 'Tibbon's translation: כוונתי בזה הפרק לבאר שארסמו אין מופת אצלו על קדמות העולם לפי דעתו. He says there in effect that Aristotle is too clear-headed a logician—he who taught the whole world what it means to demonstrate—to regard his views about the eternity of motion and the world as proved.

In the sixteenth chapter Maimonides says he will be content with endeavoring to show that the traditional Jewish doctrine of creation is not impossible, and that the philosophical arguments against it can be answered: ואשר אשתדל בו אני שאבאר כי היות העולם מחודש על דעת תורתנו שכבר בארתיהו אינו נמנע ושהראיות ההם כלם הפילוסופיות אשר יראה מהם שאין הענין כמו שזכרנו ימצא לטענות ההם כלם פנים יבטלום... The author of the treatise then points out the principle of Maimonides' criticism of Aristotle's method of procedure in this matter, which consists in arguing from the process of generation and production after the world has come into existence to the state of affairs at the time of creation, which Maimonides compares in the seventeenth chapter of the second book to a person who, being left alone on a

desert island soon after birth, should argue when he grew up that conditions in the womb must be the same as those without, and deny the fact of birth.

So far the introductory paragraph in which Maimonides is given his due. It reads in the Latin as follows:

1. Rabbi Moyses, tenens secundum superficiem dicta in Vetere Testamento, discordavit a Philosopho in ponendo aeternitatem motus. Posuit enim mundum incepisse, ut patet per ea quae ait in II° libro De Expositione Legum, cap. XV° et XVI° Unde Aristotelem credentem demonstrare aeternitatem mundi et volentem iudicare de factione rerum post sui productionem, sicut de factione earum in hora creationis, assimilat cuidam parvo volenti iudicare de conditionibus hominis extra uterum, sicut de conditionibus eius in utero, ut patet in eodem libro, cap. XVII°. Non ergo in hoc erravit, sed in aliis multis deviavit a veritate firma, et a fide catholica.

The first error of Maimonides is his laying down the opinion that in God there is no multiplicity either in fact or in idea, hence it follows that there is no Trinity in God, for three persons are three things. Maimonides therefore speaks sarcastically of the Christian sages who strain to rationalize the dogma of the Trinity. The references here given are to the first book, chapter XI, which the marginal variant corrects to LI, and to chap. LXXI of the same book, which should be changed to L.

In chapter LI (Ḥarizi 50), Maimonides in fact points out what the term unity implies, and that one must be careful not to smuggle in any kind of plurality in any disguise whatsoever. In chapter L (Ḥar. 49) he insists that belief in a given idea means that one comprehends it, mere verbal reiteration without the corresponding formation of

a consistent concept is not belief. This he applies to the belief in the unity of God, and in this connection occurs the remark, *זה כמאמר הנוצרים הוא אחד אבל הוא שלשה והשלשה אחד*, which so scandalized our author, though there seems no evidence of sarcasm.

The Latin of our treatise reads:

2. Posuit enim in Deo non esse aliquam multitudinem, nec re, nec ratione, ut patet I° libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo XI° (margin: LI°); propter quod sequitur in Deo non esse Trinitatem, cum tres personae sint tres res. Unde ipse, in eodem libro, capitulo LXXI° (read L), quasi derisive loquitur de sapientibus christianis insudantibus inquirendo de ratione Trinitatis, ac si frivolum esset Trinitatem credere.

The second error of Maimonides is his opinion that the attributes of wisdom and goodness as applied to God have no relation whatsoever to the meaning of similar attributes as applied to a human being, that the similarity is in name only. Our author objects to this on the ground that since our perfections are derived from the perfections of God, and the agent or cause always makes the effect similar to itself, pure homonymy between the divine and the human attributes of the same name is impossible.

The "De Erroribus" agrees in this matter with Thomas Aquinas. See *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, 33.—"Patet quod non quidquid de Deo et rebus aliis praedicatur, secundum puram aequivocationem dicitur...consideratur enim in huiusmodi nominum communitate ordo causae et causati..."

The reference in the *De Erroribus* is to the first book, chapter LXXVII, corrected in the margin to LVI, which

The references here are correctly given to chapters fifty-seven and sixty-one of the first book. In the former (Ḥarizi 56) we find the following discussion pertinent to the subject: אמנם מי שאין סבה למציאותו והוא השם יתעלה ויתרומם לברו ... תהיה מציאותו עצמו ואמתתו ועצמו מציאותו ואינו עצם קרה לו שימצא ... ואם כן הוא נמצא לא במציאות וכן חי ולא בחיים, ויודע לא במדע, ויכול לא ביכולת, וחכם לא בחכמה ... ולא יתבוננו אלו הענינים הדקים, כמעט שיבצרו מן השכל, במלות הנהוגות ... עד שלא נצייר הענין ההוא אלא בהקל הדבור, וכאשר השתדלנו להורות על היות האלוה לא הרבה, לא יוכל האומר לאמר אלא אחד, ואע"פ שהאחד וההרבה ממבדילי הכמות, ולזה נבין הענין ויורה השכל לאמתת הדבר באמרו אחד לא באחרות, כמו שנאמר קדמון להורות על שהוא בלתי מחודש, ובאמרו קדמון מן ההקל מה שהוא מבואר נגלה, כי הקדמון אמנם יאמר למי ששינהו הזמן ... וכל מי שלא ישינהו מקרה הזמן לא יאמר עליו באמת לא קדמון ולא חדש.

Chapter sixty-one (Ḥar. 60) begins with the statement: כל שמותיו יתעלה הנמצאים בספרים כלם נגדרים מן הפעולות...

The Latin text of the *De Erroribus* reads:

4. Ulterius erravit circa perfectiones tales, non credens eas vere in Deo existere, propter quod, I° libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo LVII°, ait quod Deus est, non in essentia, et vivit non vita, et est potens non in potentia, sed omnia talia dicta sunt de Deo per remotionem, ut innuit eodem libro et capitulo, vel dicta sunt de Deo per causalitatem, ut dicatur Deus vivus, non quod vita sit in eo, sed quia viva causat, ut patet I° libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo LXI°.

Here it would seem the author either did not fully understand the meaning of Maimonides, or if he did, he is once more in disagreement with Thomas Aquinas in a mat-

ter wherein I think the latter was not opposed by the other philosophers of the period.

As I understand Maimonides' meaning, it is this. He is not objecting so much to the belief that such perfections as existence, life, knowledge, power, wisdom, are in God, as to the danger of supposing that these attributes are found in God after the manner of their existence in us. In us all these are "accidents" added to our substance, and we are therefore composite beings, composed not merely of matter and form, but also of substance and accident. Being composite we are also subject to dissolution. The important thing is to prove God's absolute unity. But if we think of these attributes as "accidents" added to His substance, He will also be composite and not an absolute unity. Hence the importance of the notion that in God essence and existence are the same and not distinct as in all created things. a thought as old as Al-Farabi, and adopted *in toto* by Thomas Aquinas, see *Summa Contra Gentiles*, I, 22:—"Omnis res in qua est aliud essentia et aliud esse, est composita. Deus autem non est compositus...Ipsum igitur esse Dei est sua essentia."

The same motives and arguments apply to the other attributes above mentioned, and when Maimonides says:

נמצא ולא במציאות, חי לא בחיים, יודע לא במדע, יכול לא ביכלת, חכם
לא בחכמה :

he means exactly the same as Thomas Aquinas when he says "Deus est ipsa bonitas," "Intelligere Dei est sua essentia," "Deus per nihil aliud intelligit quam per suam essentiam," "Deus est veritas," "Voluntas Dei est eius essentia," "Deus est Amor," "Deus est sua vita," "Deus est sua beatitudo," "Dei potentia est eius substantia." The idea is these attributes are not some thing over and above

the essence of God, as they were believed to be in the case of natural objects in the created world. They are God's essence, which is a perfect unity, and hence it is also misleading to speak in the manner of the Mu'tazila who call them essential attributes and say He is "able" through His essence, He is "wise" through His essence, He is "living" and "willing" through His essence, because this too gives the idea of plurality. A safer form of expression is that He is One, and with His unitary essence He performs various functions or activities, instead of giving Him attributes as belonging to His essence. The very best mode of speaking of God is in the negative form by saying, He is existent but not through an attribute existence, He is wise but not through an attribute wisdom, etc. In this way we on the one hand affirm perfection of God and on the other guard against introducing plurality into His essence.

The fourth error of Maimonides is his denial of persons in the Deity, and explaining away the phrases in the Bible which to the Christian are references to the second and third persons in the Trinity, the Word, and the Spirit. Thus the words of the Psalmist (Ps. 33, 6):

בְּדִבְרֵי ה' שָׁמַיִם נִעְשׂוּ וּבְרוּחַ פִּי כָל צַבָּאִים

"By the word of God were the heavens made, and by the spirit of His lips all the hosts thereof," are to the author of our treatise indications of the Trinity, the Word and the Spirit representing the Son and the Holy Ghost respectively. He accordingly finds fault with Maimonides who understands them metaphorically to stand for the divine will and purpose.

In this connection the reference is general, indicating the first book of Maimonides but not the chapter. That may be due to the fact that in no less than three places in

the first book of the "More," Maimonides interprets this verse of the Psalms, in chapters twenty-three, sixty-five, and sixty-six.

כי כל מתחדש מאתו יתעלה ייוחס לדברו בדבר ה' שמים נעשו (32)
וברוח פיו כל צבאם דמות בפעולות הבאות מאת המלכים אשר
כליהם בהעביר רצוניהם הדבר, והוא יתברך בלתי צריך לכלי יעשה
בו, אבל פעולתו ברצונו לבד ואין לו דבור גם כן בשום פנים.

הדבור והאמירה מלה משותפת נופלת על הדבור בלשון... ונופלת (65)
על הענין המצוייר בשכל מבלתי שידובר בו... ויפול על הרצון... וכל
אמירה ודבור שבאה מיוחסת לשם הם משני הענינים האחרונים...
וכל מה שבא במעשה בראשית ויאמר ענינו רצה או חפץ... כן אמרו
בדבר ה' שמים נעשו כמו וברוח פיו כל צבאם, וכמו שפיו ורוח פיו
השאלה כן דברו ומאמרו השאלה... .

אמרו באצבע אלהים הוא כמו שאמר על השמים מעשה (66)
אצבעותיה, אשר התבאר שהם נעשו באמירה בדבר ה' שמים נעשו...
ואלו אמר בדבר אלהים היה דומה לאמרו בחפץ אלהים... .

The Latin reads:

5. Ulterius erravit circa propria personarum, credens Verbum et Spiritum Dei in divinis dici essentialiter tantum. Unde I° libro De Expositione Legum, exponens illud psalmi: Verbo Domini coeli firmati sunt et spiritu oris eius omnis eorum virtus; dicit Verbum et Spiritum in divinis sumi solum pro divina voluntate et eius essentia, qua coeli sunt facti, cum tamen ea particulariter sumantur.

The fifth error of Maimonides is that he regards the heavenly bodies as animated, saying they are rational beings, and quoting in confirmation of his view the opening phrase of the nineteenth Psalm, *השמים מספרים כבוד אל* "The heavens declare the glory of God," and the passage in Job 38, 7 *בין יחד כוכבי בקר ויריעו כל בני אלהים* "When the stars of the morning sang together, and all the sons of God shouted."

Here we notice an agreement with the view of Thomas Aquinas, who also disagrees with Maimonides regarding the nature of the heavenly bodies. He admits that the cause of their motions is an Intelligence or Intelligences, but he differs with Maimonides in the manner of conceiving the relation or connection between these Intelligences and the heavenly bodies which they move. According to Maimonides the relation is immanent or internal, the Intelligences being conceived as souls of the heavenly bodies. Thomas Aquinas regards the relation as external, the Intelligences are the movers, and the heavenly bodies are the moved, "ad hoc autem, quod moveat, non oportet, quod uniatur ei ut forma, sed per contactum virtutis, sicut motor unitur mobili" (*Summa Theologica*, I, q. 70, a. 3, quoted in Ueberweg-Heinze, II^o, p. 311).

The reference given in the *De Erroribus* is to chap. 5 of the second book of *De Expositione Legum*, which begins (Har. 6): אמנם שהנגלים חיים משכילים ר"ל משינים זה אמת נכון: (Har. 6): ג"כ מצד התורה, ושאנים נשמים מתים כאש וכארץ כמו שחשבו הסכלים, אבל הם כמו שאמרו הפילוסופים בעלי חיים עובדים את אדוניהם ישבחוהו ויהללוהו שבח גדול ומהללים עצומים, אמר השמים מספרים כבוד אל וגו'... אמנם דעת החכמים בזה איני רואה אותו צריך לבאור ולא לראיה התבונן סדורם בברכת הירח ומה שנכפל בתפלות ותורף המדרשות באמרו וצבא השמים לך משתחיים, ובאמרו ברוך יחד כוכבי בקר ויריעו כל בני אלהים...

The Latin text of the treatise follows:

6. Ulterius erravit circa supercoelestia corpora, ponens ea animata esse, et dicens ipsa esse animalia rationalia, adducens pro se illud psalmi: Coeli enarrant, etc.; et illud Iob: Cum me laudabant astra matutina. Quae omnia patent II^o libro De Expositione Legum, cap. V^o.

The sixth error of Maimonides relates to his views concerning the end of the world. While he disagrees with Aristotle, who assumes the eternity of motion, and hence the eternity of the world, Maimonides agrees with him in part, namely, that motion once begun will never cease, or that this world will continue ever to be ruled by the same laws of nature which were once established at the time of creation. And as for the passages in the Prophets which seem to signify the end of the world, such as Isa. 65, 17: **כי הנני בורא שמים חדשים וארץ חדשה**, "for behold I create new heavens and a new earth," it is foolish, according to Maimonides, to take them literally, and the context shows, especially to him who is familiar with the style of the prophets, that the reference is not to a different world, but to the same world in which we are, and the prophet's expression of new heavens and a new earth is a figure of speech for a regenerate and prosperous Jerusalem, as is shown in the sequel *ib.*, 18:

כי הנני בורא את ירושלים גילה ועמה משוש:

"For behold I create Jerusalem, a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Similarly he explains the passage in Joel 3, 4:

השמש יהפך לחשך והירח לדם לפני בא יום ה' הגדול והנורא:

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord," as referring not to the Day of Judgment, but to the defeat of Sennacherib near Jerusalem, or to the defeat of Gog and Magog near Jerusalem in the days of the Messiah.

The reference given in the *De Erroribus* is to chapter XIX of the second book of *De Expositione Legum*, which should be corrected to XXIX (*Ḥar.* 30), as is evident to any one who will consult that chapter, and it is not neces-

sary to quote any of it here as it is lengthy, and the gist of it has just been given. We may close this point then with quoting the Latin text of the *De Erroribus*.

7. Ulterius erravit circa motum supercoelestium corporum, et circa eorum innovationem. Nam licet crediderit motum incepisse, credidit tamen ipsum nunquam desinere. Unde credidit mundum nequaquam universaliter innovari; et quod dictum est per prophetam: Erunt coeli novi et terra nova, dicit huiusmodi coelos novos iam esse. Exponens autem illud Ioelis: Sol convertetur in tenebras et luna in sanguinem, antequam veniet dies Domini, magna et terribilis, non de die iudicii, sed de morte Gog et Magog, et de morte Sennacherib, quae omnia patent ex II^o libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo XIX^o (read XXIX) ubi plane vult tempus et motum nunquam deficere, ut *manifestius patet ex alia translatione*.

What is meant by the last words in italics (mine) is hard to say. Is it possible that in the thirteenth century there was more than one Latin translation of the "More Nebukim"? That is scarcely likely. Or does it mean that the author has reference to the two Hebrew translations, Ibn Tibbon and al-Ḥarizi, and knowing that his Latin text was based on Ḥarizi, he refers to Ibn Tibbon in which it is made plainer that Maimonides thinks motion and time are everlasting? This seems also unlikely, for if he meant a Hebrew translation, he would scarcely have called it simply, "*alia translatio*." Besides we should then have to think of the author as a Christian Hebraist who is not particularly proud of his unusual knowledge, and does not let us see it otherwise. Might he have been a Jewish convert to Christianity, who in his zeal for the adopted religion was eager to defend it against the views of an authority in

philosophy like Maimonides, but who was loathe to say anything which would call attention to his Jewish origin?

In Tibbon's translation as well as in Ḥarizi's it appears clearly that Maimonides believed in the eternity of time and motion *a parte post*, as the following will show (*ibid.*):

והענין אשר נלך סביבו כבר התבאר, והוא שהפסד זה העולם והשתנותו ממה שהוא עליו, או השתנות דבר מטבעו והמשכו אל השנוי ההוא הוא דבר שלא בא אלינו בזה דברי נביא ולא דברי חכמים, ועוד כי אמרם שתא אלפי הוי עלמא וחד חרוב אינו העדר המציאות לנמרי, ואמרו וחד חרוב תורה על השאר הזמן.

The seventh error of Maimonides is in relation to his views on prophecy. He is of the opinion that the prophetic power is not a privilege bestowed upon an individual by the grace of God purely and simply, but that given a certain natural aptitude, a person may achieve the power of prophecy by intellectual and moral effort.

The reference to Ch. XV. of the second part of *De Expositione Legum* is properly corrected in the margin to XXXVI (Ḥar. 37).

The Latin text reads:

8. Ulterius erravit circa prophetiam, credens hominem se posse sufficienter disponere ad gratiam prophetiae, et quod Deus non eligit in prophetando quemcumque hominem singularem, sed illum qui se aptat ad talia. Unde visus est velle divinam providentiam dependere ex operibus nostris. Haec autem patent II° libro De Expositione Legum capitulo XV° (margin: XXXVI; correct).

The eighth error of Maimonides is in his view of divine Omnipotence. He says there are some things God can do and some things he cannot. Among the latter he

cites as an example the production of an accident without a subject, and charges those philosophers whom he calls "separati" (= Mu'tazila) with ignorance of scientific method because they maintain that God can produce an accident without a subject.

The reference is given to the second book chapter XV, which should be corrected to third book ch. XV.

There is a slight inaccuracy here in the presentation of Maimonides' view, especially as regards the reference to the Mu'tazila. This is due to the fact that the author of the treatise does not seem interested in the principles or methods by which Maimonides arrives at his conclusions, but in the conclusions themselves. Hence Maimonides' classifications do not interest him. It is sufficient for him to know that according to Maimonides there are some things God cannot do, to arouse his theological indignation, without endeavoring to grasp the distinctions based upon a sound principle, or to criticise the principle itself.

Thus Maimonides understands by the term "the impossible," that which is logically impossible, or the self-contradictory, which is ultimately the meaningless. It would be absurd to say, he holds, that God can do the impossible, for that would mean that He can do the meaningless, for example, the simultaneous co-existence of opposites. This, he says, no one doubts who understands the matter. There is room for doubt as to whether a given case belongs to the category of the "impossible" or not, and as a matter of fact there is a difference of opinion among philosophers as to whether the existence of accident without a subject belongs to the category of the impossible or not. Thus the Mu'tazila think that God can produce accident without a subject of inherence, though it is not

philosophical analysis that has led them to this conclusion, but theological exigencies.

Though it is true that Maimonides does not think much of the speculations of the *Mutakallimun*, he does not charge them here with ignorance, as the author of the *De Erroribus* intimates.

The following are his words:

9. Ulterius erravit circa divinam potentiam. Dicit aliqua esse Deo possible, aliqua non; inter quae impossibilia narrat impossibile esse accidens sine subjecto; et quosdam, quos appellat separatos, quia dixerunt Deum hoc posse, dicit ignorasse viam disciplinalium scientiarum. Haec autem patent II° (read III°) libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo XV°.

The ninth error of Maimonides is in relation to his views of Providence. His opinion is that divine providence extends in man to the individual as well as the species, but in the lower animals and in other things God's providence has to do only with the species, but does not extend to the individual, and the falling of the leaf from the tree is a matter of accident and not of special divine will.

The reference is correctly given to the seventeenth chapter of the third book in which Maimonides expresses his own view as follows:

ואשר אאמיננהו אני בואת הפינה ר"ל בהשגחה האלהית, הוא מה שאספר לך ... והוא שאני אאמין שההשגחה האלהית אמנם היא בזה העולם התחתון, ר"ל מתחת גלגל הירח, באישי מין האדם לבד, וזה המין לבדו הוא אשר כל עניני אישיו ומה שישגם מוטב או רע נמשך אחר הדין ... אבל שאר בעלי חיים וכל שכן הצמחים וחולתם, דעתי בהן דעת ארסטו, לא אאמין כלל שזה העלה נפל בהשגחה בו ... אבל אלו כלם אצלי

במקרה נמור כמו שחושב ארסמו ... ולא תחשוב שזה הדעת יסתור אותו אמרו נותן לבהמה לחמה וגו' ... כי אלו כלם השגחה מינית לא אישית.

The Latin text of the *De Erroribus* reads:

10. Ulterius erravit circa divinam providentiam. Credidit enim Deum habere providentiam hominum quantum ad speciem et quantum ad singularia; aliorum autem dixit Deum tantum habere providentiam quantum ad speciem, non secundum singularia. Unde casus foliorum de arbore, et aliorum quae contingunt circa singularia talia, noluit subdi ordini divinae providentiae, sed aestimavit omnia talia fieri per accidens, ut ex III^o libro De Expositione Legum patet, capitulo XVII^o.

The tenth error of Maimonides has to do with the influence exerted by God on the human will. Maimonides says that though God could influence or change a given person's will or nature, He does not do so, for if He did, prophetic admonition and the promise of reward and punishment would be useless, God could simply so form the will and nature of man that he should always do what is right. The consequence which follows from this, and which the author of the *De Erroribus* cannot accept, is that man can avoid sin without divine assistance; and divine grace, which is an important Catholic dogma, becomes superfluous. Maimonides' position, our author says, is even worse than that of Pelagius, for according to the latter, although we can live justly without Grace, still it is not superfluous, for grace makes right living easier.

The reference is correctly given to chapter thirty-two, though the book is not indicated. The third is meant, as it is clear that the author follows the order of the *More*

Nebukim in the selection of his errors. Maimonides says there in fact:

טבע בני אדם לא ישנהו השם כלל על צד המופת ... ולא אמרתי
זה מפני שאני מאמין ששנוי טבע כל אחד מבני אדם קשה על השם
יתעלה, אך הוא אפשר ונופל תחת היכולת, אלא שהוא לא רצה כלל
לעשות זה ולא ירצהו לעולם כפי הפינות התוריות ואלו היה מרצונו
לשנות טבע כל איש מבני אדם למה שירצהו יתעלה מן האיש ההוא,
היה בטל שליחות הנביאים ונתינת התורה כלה...

The Latin text follows:

11. Ulterius erravit circa humanam voluntatem et naturam, ponens quod licet talia a Deo mutari possint, tamen non mutantur, quia tunc frustra esset admonitio prophetarum; credens hominem per se ipsum, absque speciali Dei auxilio posse omnia peccata vitare, et omnes monitiones prophetarum adimplere, ex qua positione videtur sequi gratiam divinam penitus superfluere; propter quod haec positio est peior positione Pelagii, secundum quam licet possemus recte vivere sine gratia, non tamen superfluit gratia; quia eam habendo faciliiori modo recte vivimus. Quod autem sic senserit Rabbi Moyses, ut dictum est, patet per ea quae ait in (III^o) libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo XXXII^o.

The eleventh and last error of Maimonides is that according to him fornication was permitted before the law was given, from which our author infers that, according to Maimonides, fornication is not a sin according to the law of nature, and it becomes a sin only by divine prohibition. It is not clear to me that this is precisely the opinion of Maimonides. For he does endeavor to give a rational account of the prohibitions of the Bible, to show that they have a basis in nature and in reason. So he shows clearly

that the prohibitions of promiscuous intercourse and the other laws in the matter of the relations of the sexes have as their primary motive the perfection of the social life. Maimonides' remark in connection with the Judah-Tamar story is purely incidental, and has not the dignity of a principle, as our author makes it. Maimonides infers from Judah's conduct that fornication was common in those days before the law was given, but he does not intimate that it was proper. From his principles it would rather follow that it was just as improper before the law as after, since it prevented the highest development of social life which is the motive of the law: **היא אחת מכוונות התורה הנדולות**. His remark concerning Judah and Tamar is: **ובאור זה שבעילת קדשה קודם מתן תורה היה כבעילת האדם אשתו אחר מתן תורה, ר"ל שהיה מעשה מותר לא היה אדם מרחיק אותו כלל...**

The reference to the forty-ninth chapter of the third book is correct. The Latin text follows:

12. Ulterius erravit circa humanos actus, ponens fornicationem non esse peccatum in iure naturali; sed solum est ibi peccatum prohibitionis, quod falsum est, cum matrimonium sit de iure naturali. Unde ante legem, ut ait licitum erat; propter quod dicit Iudam non peccasse cum Thamar, quia fuit ante tempus legis. Haec autem patent in III° libro De Expositione Legum, capitulo XLIX°.

The above enumeration of the errors of Maimonides, which forms chapter twelve of the *De Erroribus Philosophorum*, is followed in chapter thirteen by a brief summary of the same errors in fifteen propositions:

Capitulum XIII.

In quo summatim colliguntur dicti errores. Omnes ergo praedicti errores sunt hi:

1. Quod in Deo non est aliqua multitudo, nec re nec ratione.
2. Quod in Deo non est Trinitas.
3. Quod perfectiones in nobis et in Deo dicuntur pure aequivoce.
4. Quod attributa divina non dicunt aliquid positive.
5. Quod verbum dicitur in Deo essentialiter solum.
6. Quod corpora supercoelestia sunt animata.
7. Quod tempus licet inceperit, nunquam tamen desinet.
8. Quod motus supercoelestium corporum semper est.
9. Quod mundus nunquam universaliter innovabitur.
10. Quod homo se potest sufficienter disponere ad gratiam prophetiae.
11. Quod Deus non potest accidens facere sine subiecto.
12. Quod divina providentia in aliis quam in homine se extendit quantum ad speciem, non quantum ad singularia; et quidquid circa talia evenit, est per accidens et improvisum.
13. Quod nunquam immutat voluntatem humanam.
14. Quod homo per seipsum potest recte vivere et implere monitiones prophetarum.
15. Quod simplex fornicatio non erat peccatum mortale ante dationem legis.